

CASE STUDY OF
SMALL FARMERS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SFDA)
GURGAON, HARYANA STATE, INDIA

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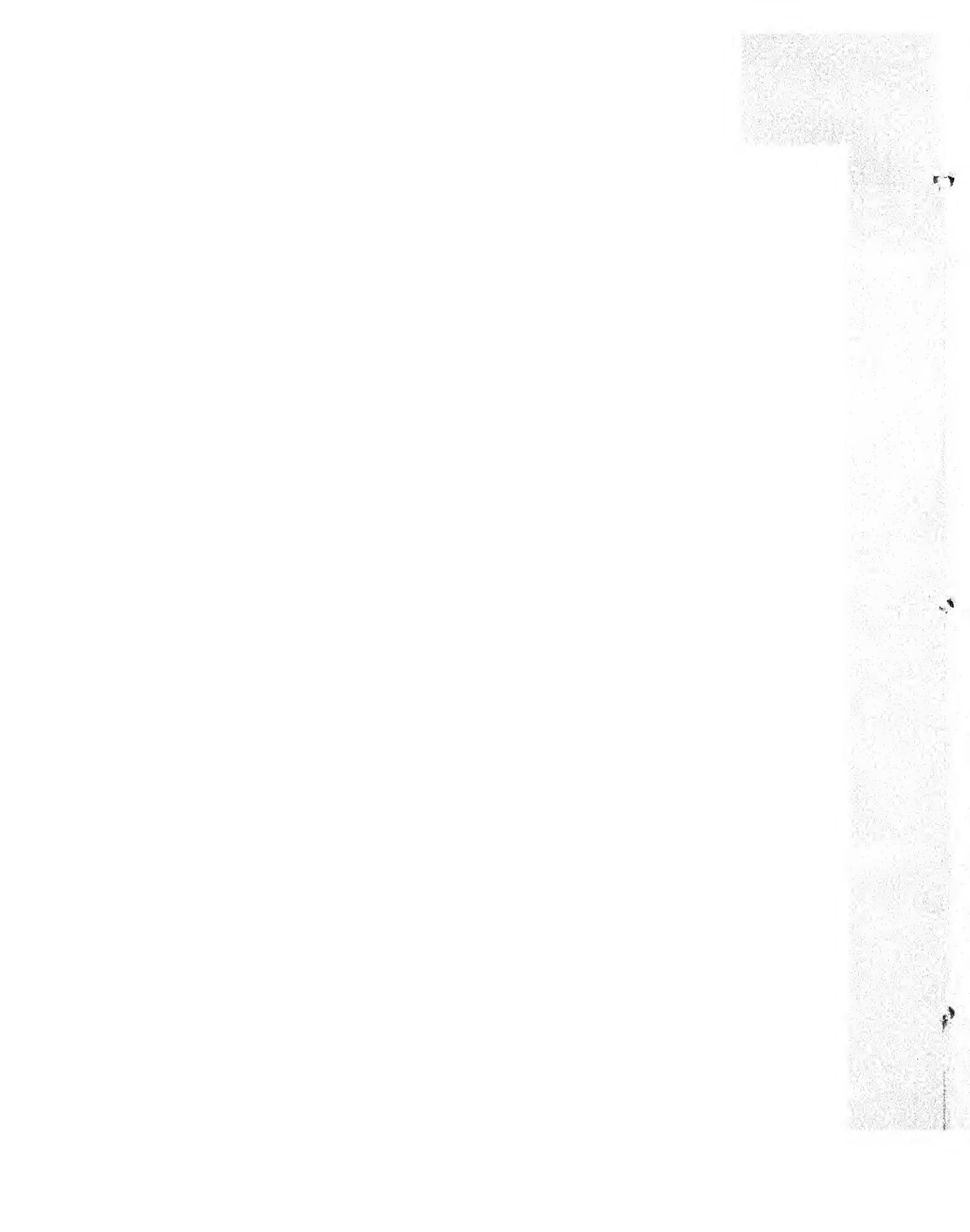
M.L. SUDAN

Indian Institute of Public Administration
Indraprastha Estate, Ring Road,
New Delhi - 110002
INDIA



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CONTENTS

		<u>Paras</u>
	INTRODUCTION	1 - 3
Section-I	: THE BACKGROUND	4 - 26
	1. Objectives of Indian Development Plans	5-10
	2. Strategy for Rural and Agricultural Development	11-23
	3. Land Distribution in India	24-26
Section-II	: SALIENT FEATURES OF SFDA GURGAON	27 - 66
	1. Recommendations for Setting up SFDA's	29-36
	2. Area of Operation of SFDA Gurgaon	37-38
	3. Criteria for Selection of SFDA Districts	39
	4. Salient Facts about SFDA Gurgaon Area	40-42
	5. Main Functions of SFDA Gurgaon	43-44
	6. Scope of SFDA Gurgaon	45-46
	7. Definition of Small and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers	47-52
	8. Administrative Set up of SFDA Gurgaon	53-60
	9. Budget and Overall Progress of SFDA Gurgaon	61-66
Section-III	: AN APPRAISAL OF ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	67 -112
	1. Important Reasons for Substantial Utilization of Funds	69
	2. System of Propagation of SFDA Programme, Securing Participation of Beneficiaries and Handling of their Loan Applications	70-83

3. System of Coordination and Review and Involvement of Peoples' Representatives	84-91
4. Formulation of Schemes, their Suitability and Involvement of Beneficiaries and Criteria for Improving their Income Levels	92-99
5. System of Follow-up of Beneficiaries and Evaluation of the Impact of the Programme	100-104
6. Integration of Rural Development Agencies at the District Level	105-108
7. Conclusion	109-112

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- M.L. SUDAN

INTRODUCTION

The Small Farmers Development Agencies (SFDA's) were started in India during the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74) and presently this programme covers 168 districts out of a total of 406 districts (1979) in the entire country. The SFDA's are engaged in helping the small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers to improve their levels of living through the operation of various schemes and financial assistance/subsidies.

2. SFDA programme has formed an important element of the broad strategy for rural and agricultural development in India during the seventies. Various Special Programmes including SFDA were introduced in the country during the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plans to meet the challenge of economic disparities arising from the operation of the earlier strategy. In order to place the SFDA programme in proper perspective, it is necessary to briefly touch on the important changes made in the strategy over the years leading to the introduction of various programmes including SFDA. A brief exposition of this background is contained in Section-I.

3. Section-II of the paper deals with salient features of SFDA Gurgaon covering the genesis of the programme, functions and scope of SFDA Gurgaon, operational definitions of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers, administrative set up and financial arrangements for the management of this programme and overall progress of SFDA Gurgaon. Section-III presents an appraisal of organisational arrangements including the system for involvement of beneficiaries in the programme. Conclusion is given at the end of this Section.

Section - I

THE BACKGROUND

4. The background exposition briefly covers the following:

1. Objectives of Indian Development Plans
2. Strategy for Rural and Agricultural Development:
 - Community Development Programme
 - Intensive Agricultural Programmes
 - New Strategy of Agricultural Development
 - Social Justice and New Strategy of Agricultural Development
 - Introduction of Special Programmes including SFDA
 - Introduction of Integrated Rural Development
3. Land Distribution in India

Objectives of Indian Development Plans

5. India ventured into an era of planned development with the setting up of the National Planning Commission in March 1950, by a Government of India resolution. The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) was consequently launched during 1951-52 and we have since entered the period of Sixth Five Year Plan (1973-83).

6. The central objective of planning in India has been to initiate, intensify and strengthen the process of development which will raise living standards and open out to the people new opportunities for a richer and more varied life coupled with social justice. The development goals in India have been derived from the Directive Principles of State Policy contained in the Constitution of the country. Article 38 of the Constitution provides that "The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life."

7. In December 1954, the Indian Parliament adopted the "Socialist Pattern of Society" as the objectives of economic and social policy. This was, however, a more concretised expression of the broad approach indicated by the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution. The term

1. "Socialist Pattern of Society" was commented upon and elaborated in the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) document and a long term strategy for economic advance was formulated based on that concept. Essentially, the concept of 'Socialist Pattern of Society' "means that the basic criterion for determining the lines of advance must not be private profit but social gain, and that the pattern of development and the structure of socio-economic relations should be so planned that they result not only in appreciable increases in national income and employment but also in great equality of incomes and wealth. Major decision regarding production, distribution, consumption and investment and - in fact all significant socio-economic relationships - must be made by agencies informed by social purpose. The benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society and there should be progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power."¹

8. While the immediate objectives of Indian Five Year Plans have varied from Plan to Plan in the light of the prevailing economic situation, their main objective, in pursuance of the Directive Principles of State Policy and the adoption of the

1. Government of India, Planning Commission, Second Five Year Plan (1956-61), (New Delhi, 1956), p.22.

"Socialist Pattern of Society", has been to achieve economic growth and modernization with continuous stress on social justice. Thus the Indian Development Plans have been seeking to achieve the following major and basic objectives :

- i) Rapid economic growth
- ii) Progressive reduction in economic inequalities
- iii) Balanced regional development
- iv) National self-reliance
- v) Increased employment opportunities
- vi) Improving the conditions of less privileged sections of society

9. It is not necessary to examine here the performance of the Indian economy with reference to each of the above mentioned objectives of planned development. However, for a broad view of the situation, it may suffice to make three general observations on the overall performance of the Indian economy :

- i) The progress has been slow and uneven and the Indian economy is still beset with many problems. As against the targeted growth rate of 5 per cent or more, Indian economy recorded an average annual growth rate of 3.65 per cent during 1951 to 1977 and the per capita income increased only at less than 1.5 per cent per year.²
- ii) Inspite of various problems, Indian economy has made considerable progress in selected fields of agriculture, industry, self-reliance, development of infra-structural facilities and social services.

2. Raj Krishna, "Assessing India's Economic Development", Mainstream (New Delhi), Vol.XIX No.8, October 25, 1980, p.28.

iii) The progress in the field of social justice has been very slow. India still continues to face the major problems of unemployment, poverty and disparities in income and wealth and regional development which are a matter of very serious concern for our society.

10. It was in view of the increasing rural disparities that the Special Programmes for weaker sections of society and backward areas including the SFDA programme, were introduced during the Fourth Plan (1969-74) and Fifth Plan (1974-79) periods. We may now proceed briefly to touch on the major aspects of the strategy of rural and agricultural development leading to the introduction of these Special Programmes.

Strategy for Rural and Agricultural Development

11. In India, 80 per cent of the population lives in 576 thousand villages and is mostly dependent on agriculture and allied activities with 70 per cent of the working force engaged in agricultural pursuits for its livelihood. Rural and agricultural development thus go together. In view of their vital importance in the Indian economy, the rural and agricultural development have formed an important element of planning strategy and programmes of development under the Five Year Plans.

12. We started with the concept of integrated rural development in 1952 with the launching of the multi-purpose Community Development Programme covering all aspects of rural development and setting up of the National Extension Service.

To start with, this programme was taken up on a pilot basis with 55 projects each covering 300 villages but was soon extended to other areas covering the entire country by 1963. Under this programme, each district in the country has been divided into a number of Community Development Blocks, each Block covering about 100 villages. The total number of CD Blocks in the country is about 5100. A separate administrative structure was also created for these Blocks. The development team at the Block level is headed by a Block Development Officer (BDO) who is assisted by a team of specialists at the Block level called Extension Officers (EOs) drawn from all development departments. The development work at the village is looked after the multi-purpose level extension functionaries called Village Level Workers (VLWs), each VLW looking after about 10 villages. The CD Blocks are thus the primary units for rural and agricultural development in the country.

13. However, during this long period of planned development and emerging compulsions of the changing situation first arising from lagging agricultural and food production and later from increasing income disparities, unemployment and concern for poverty, this strategy of integrated rural development has undergone various vicissitudes and changes to meet the new challenges. The important changes introduced in this strategy of rural and agricultural development leading to the introduction of Special Programmes like SFDA are briefly

stated below.

14. With the slow progress on agricultural and food fronts particularly in the early 60's it was felt that it had happened due to diffusion of efforts under the multi-purpose CD programme. Consequently, it was first decided that 80 per cent of the time of multi-purpose VLWs in the CD Blocks should be devoted to agricultural development. Subsequently, in 1963 it was decided that the entire time of the VLWs should be devoted to agricultural development. Thus, while the multi-purpose approach of the C.D. programme was continued, stress was considerably increased, at the operational level, for agricultural production.

Intensive Agricultural Programmes 15. It was further decided to introduce intensive agricultural programmes. As a result, Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP or Package Programme) was introduced in a few selected districts in 1960-61. The aim of the IADP or Package Programme was to concentrate adequate efforts and resources in areas with the optimum potentialities for achieving striking results in agricultural production within a relatively short time. On the basis of experience gained in the IADP districts, another programme called Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme (IAAP) was introduced in March 1964. Essentially, this was the extension of the concept of Package Programme (IADP) to other selected areas

in the country having optimum potentialities for speedy agricultural development. Both these programmes (IADP and IAMP) operated through the agency of the C.D. Blocks with the strengthening of the administrative/extension set up at the district, block and village levels in the selected area.

New Strategy
of
Agricultural
Development

16. The serious concern in the country due to poor performance on the food front particularly during the first three years (1961-62 to 1963-64) of the Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) also led to the radical reorientation in the agricultural research assumptions and policy leading to the development and use of high yielding varieties (HYVs). The high yielding varieties programme was consequently introduced in 1966-67 as a part of the intensive agricultural strategy of concentration of efforts and resources in the areas with optimum agricultural production potential backed by new technology. This strategy was named as New Strategy of Agricultural Development. The salient features of this New Strategy being : (a) stress on high yielding varieties, (b) optimum utilization of the production potential in areas with assured irrigation and rainfall by higher inputs through the intensive agricultural programmes, (c) introduction of short duration crops and (d) effective utilization of irrigational potential. This strategy is still in operation. At the same time, incentive prices were introduced

with the setting up of the Agricultural Prices Commission in January, 1965. While suggesting prices, the Commission is supposed to strike a proper balance between the incentive for the producers and reasonableness for the consumers.

17. The New Strategy of Agricultural Production has enabled the country to achieve perceptible increases in agricultural and food production. The country has since achieved self-sufficiency in food production and we have built up a substantial buffer stock of foodgrains.

Social Justice 18. This strategy, however, created other problems in the field of social justice. It led to the concentration of incomes in well-developed areas; and brought major gains to relatively bigger farmers leading to income and regional disparities.³ Although the intensive agricultural programmes "did not rule out the inclusion of the small and marginal farmers, the natural propensity for field-level staff was to concentrate on the well-to-do large farmers with sufficient resources at their disposal. Thus, while the programmes did result in substantial increase in food production, this also resulted in accentuating economic

3. Francine R. Frankel, India's Green Revolution: Economic Gains and Political Costs, (Bombay, 1971), p.191 and C.H. Hanumantha Rao, Technological Change and Distribution of Gains in Indian Agriculture, (Delhi, 1975), p.178.

4

disparities between the rich and poor classes of farmers."

19. This happened among other things, due to lack of adequate realisation that the rural community is a differentiated one with its feudal power nexus where the 'rural poor' and the 'rural weak' including the Scheduled Castes and Tribes are hardly in a position to participate or contribute significantly or even derive any benefit from the programmes, schemes or agencies as they have been operating. There was thus a need for intervention by the government with 'positive discrimination' in the favour of those less privileged and disadvantaged sections of society. It was also necessary to follow area development approach to achieve effective harnessing of the development potentialities at the local level.

Introduction
of Special
Programmes
including SFDA

20. To tackle these problems, some steps were initiated during the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74) in terms of starting Small and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers programme; and the Command Area Development Programme. During the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), additional Special Programmes for the development of backward areas and weaker sections of the rural society were started. Various Special Programmes which are currently in operation

4. T.K. Chakravarty, "Development of Small and Marginal Farmers : A Review of Policies and Programmes", in Rural Development in India: Some Facts, National Institute of Rural Development, (Hyderabad, 1979), p.283.

are mentioned below :

1) Resource/Problem based Area Programme:	i) Drought Prone Areas Programme
	ii) Command Area Development Programme
	iii) Hill Area Development Programme
2) Target Group Programmes:	i) SFDA programme
	ii) Tribal Development Agency Projects
3) Area Specific Incentive programme:	Concessional Finance, Investment Subsidy and Transport Subsidy Schemes for Industries
4) Comprehensive Area Development programme:	Sub -Plans for Hill and Tribal Areas

21. As many as 340 districts have been covered by one or more of these Special Programmes. All these programmes (excluding Area Specific Incentive Programme) as also the intensive agricultural development programme under New Strategy and other programmes of rural development are being implemented mainly through the organisational set up of the Community Development Blocks.

22. To complete the picture, it may be stated here that the strategy for rural development during the current plan i.e. Sixth Five Year Plan will be the strategy of Integrated Rural Development. According to the Draft Sixth Five Year Plan (1978-83), "Experience of various rural development

Introduction
of Integrated
Rural
Development

programmes in the earlier plans has shown that a mere project approach or a sectoral approach is not adequate to lead to an overall development of the area and distribution of benefits to local population particularly the weaker sections of the society. The distribution of unemployment and poverty and the potential for development of agriculture and related activities vary widely from region to region and also within regions. Different areas in the country are at different levels of development and have varying degrees of potential depending on local endowments. The efforts will now be to make the programmes area specific and utilise the local endowments for growth for social justice and full employment. It will, therefore, be necessary to plan for integration of various programmes and establish appropriate linkages for optimal utilisation of local endowments consistent with the plan objectives, local needs and environmental balance".⁵ It further says that decentralised planning emphasised in the past has never really been implemented in an orderly fashion. In this background, it states that "it has been decided that a block which will possibly be reasonably homogeneous, will be taken as the primary area for local planning. At the same time, it is realised that the block level planning will have to be built in a frame of district level planning which has

5. Government of India, Planning Commission, Draft Five Year Plan: 1978-83, (New Delhi, 1978), p.154.

to be adjusted to the overall State Plan. The State Plan already forms a part of the National Plan."⁶

23. The Government of India have already issued instructions and guidelines for the implementation of Integrated Rural Development (IRD) programme. Besides emphasising the approach of integrated development and area specific programmes, these lay great stress on special efforts to be made in a systematic manner for helping, on a priority basis, the weaker sections of society consisting of small and marginal farmers, share croppers, agricultural and non-agricultural labourers, rural artisans and families belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who are below the poverty line. According to the guidelines "For the purpose of identifying a family below the poverty line, an income of Rs.62 per head per month may be adopted. On an average, a rural family may have five members and thus those families having an income from all sources of less than Rs.3500 per annum may be treated as living below the poverty line."⁷ The basic objective being to help these weaker section families to cross the poverty line. In identifying the beneficiaries under the programme, the adoption of "Antyodaya" approach has also been stressed. The approach

6. Ibid., pp.159-60.

7. Government of India, Ministry of Rural Reconstruction, Manual on Integrated Rural Development Programme, (New Delhi, January 1980), p.4.

lays emphasis on the need to extend the benefits first to the poorest among the poor. It has also been decided to extend the IRD guidelines to the SFDA programme. It means that IRD approach will be followed for the development of the area and the beneficiary oriented component of SFDA programme for helping the weaker sections of society will be governed by the IRD guidelines in all respects. In other words, IRD programme has been superimposed on SFDA.

Land Distribution in India

24. Before we take up the discussion of the Case Study of SFDA Gurgaon, it may be useful to give a broad idea about the distribution of land in India and the proportion of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. Land distribution in India is very uneven and skewed and an overwhelming majority of our farmers fall in the category of marginal and small farmers possessing extremely small areas of land. This position will become clear from the following table :

Distribution of Ownership Holdings in India:
1971-72

Size groups of ownership holdings	Number of households and area owned In ('000)							
	Number of household			Area owned (ha.)		Average area		
	No.	% of Total	Cumulative %	Area	% of Total	Cumulative %	(ha.)	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
1. Sub-marginal (Below 0.4 ha.)	27600	38.99	38.99	2472	2.07	2.07	0.09	
2. Marginal (0.4 - 1.0 ha.)	13905	19.64	58.63	9201	7.69	9.76	0.66	
3. Small (1.0 - 2.0 ha.)	12141	17.14	75.77	17555	14.67	24.43	1.44	
4. Semi-medium (2.0 - 4.0 ha.)	9611	13.57	89.34	26221	21.92	46.35	2.73	
5. Large (4.0 ha. and above)	7546	10.66	100.00	64187	53.65	100.00	8.51	
Total	70312	100.00		119636	100.00		1.69	

Source: National Sample Survey, 26th Round,
 No. 215 (1971-72)

25. The above figures show that the holdings of nearly 3/4th of the households possessing about 1/4th of the area are below 2 hectares of land. Further, 39 per cent of households are with holdings below 0.4 hectares possessing only a meagre 2 per cent of the total area. The proportion of agricultural labourers in the total working population is also very high. According to 1971 Census, agricultural labourers formed 26.3 per cent of the total working population of 180.4 millions.

26. In view of the above facts, whatever operational definition of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers may be adopted (we will come to this in Section-II) for the implementation of various programmes for them, the numbers involved in the entire country in these categories are bound to be staggering. It is thus one of the greatest challenges facing the country to improve their lot to realise the objective of social justice. As already stated, the Government have evolved, among other things, the strategy of Special Programmes including SFDA to meet this challenging situation. Among various programmes for the weaker sections of society, SFDA has a crucial place and vital role to play in this regard.

SALIENT FEATURES OF SFDA JURGAON

27. "During the last 30 years after independence, our economy has been modernised and made more self-reliant, and there has been a modest rate of growth in the per capita income, inspite of the growth of population. However, the number of unemployed has not shown any downward trend and more than 40% of the population still live below the 'poverty line'. Experience has also shown that the fruits of development have been mostly availed of by the better endowed areas on the one hand, and the better-off members of the rural society on the other. In other words, sectoral or programme approach has not really made any impact on the rural poor. This led to the realisation that, unless a direct attack on poverty is launched by identification of the members of the 'target group' and providing assistance to them in terms of credit, inputs, subsidy, and facilities for marketing etc., the development efforts are likely to bypass the poor. As a result, Government initiated the Small Farmers' Development Agency Programme for the benefit of small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, share croppers etc."⁸ Similarly, other Special

8. Ibid., p.1.

Programmes (listed in para 20 of Section-I) for the development of backward areas and weaker sections of the society were introduced.

28. All Special Programmes including SFDA are clearly and essentially directed to achieve the objective of social justice by improving the conditions of the 'rural poor' and 'rural weak' and to make them partners in development and prosperity of the country through appropriate schemes for increasing production and employment. Besides these Special Programmes, the Indian Plans also lay stress on land reforms (these are of crucial importance and need to be further intensified), investment in community irrigation etc. works, availability of easy institutional credit and other employment and self-employment programmes along with the development of agriculture, industries, infrastructure and social service.

Recommendations for Setting Up SFDA's

All India
Rural Credit
Review
Committee

29. The setting up of the Small Farmers Development Agencies (SFDA's) during the Fourth Five Year Plan was based on the recommendations of the All India Rural Credit Review Committee (1969). This Committee was appointed by the Reserve Bank of India in July 1966, which was to be the

first year of the Fourth Plan (the launching of the Fourth Plan was postponed by three years and finally it covered the period 1969-74) "to review the supply of rural credit in the context of the Fourth Plan generally, and in particular, the requirements of intensive programmes of agricultural production throughout the country and to make appropriate recommendations".⁹

30. Among other things, the Committee gave special attention to the question of credit for the small but potentially viable farmers and came to the conclusion that the benefits of various rural development programmes which have been under implementation during the first three Plans and of cooperative credit did not flow to the small farmers either in proportion to their numbers or needs. The Committee, therefore, suggested ways and means to make adequate cooperative credit available to them and also proposed the setting up of pilot projects in selected districts for improving the conditions of small farmers through support in terms of resources and technical guidance. The Committee, however, left out of consideration the sub-marginal farmers and agricultural labourers, as in their opinion, those groups required far-reaching programmes of

9. Reserve Bank of India, All India Rural Credit Review Committee Report, (Bombay, 1969), p.4.

rehabilitation extending beyond credit which were outside their terms of reference.

31. While making proposals for the establishment of pilot projects for helping the small but potentially viable farmers, the Committee felt that this group "had its typical social and economic attributes and problems which require innovative measures and methodology, needing the full time attention of people involved in this task. The need thus was felt for a special catalyst institution which would motivate and coordinate the other agencies towards achieving the goals of helping small farmers. To attain these goals, the Committee proposed the establishment of a special catalyst institution called the Small Farmers' Development Agency"¹⁰ (SFDA).

Setting up of SFDAs and MFLAs 32. The recommendations of the Committee for setting up SFDAs and MFLAs were accepted by the Government of India. Consequently, 46 SFDA Pilot Projects including SFDA Gurgaon, were started during the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74). In addition, the Government also established 41 Marginal Farmers' and Agricultural Labourers' Agencies (MFLAs) for improving the lot of these groups. Each project covered a selected district and some of the selected districts among these were covered by both these projects.

10. T.K. Chakravaraty, "Development of Small and Marginal Farmers: A Review of Policies and Programmes" in Rural Development in India: Some Facts, National Institute of Rural Development, (Hyderabad, 1979), p.284.

33. SFDA were initially sanctioned for five years and each Agency was expected to help 50,000 small but potentially viable farmers during this period. The budget allowed for five years was Rs.15 million per Agency. The programme was, however, continued subsequently as explained in para 35. In the case of MFALAs, each Project was expected to cover 20,000 families of whom 2/3rds were to be marginal farmers and rest agricultural labourers. In the case Composit Project areas where both SFDA and MFALA programmes were introduced together, an overall target of 50,000 was fixed for small/marginal farmers as well as agricultural labourers and no proportion was fixed for the coverage of the component target group.

National Commission on Agriculture

34. In 1973, the National Commission on Agriculture, while suggesting the expansion of these programmes, also recommended the merger of SFDA and MFALA into a single integrated programme. The Commission felt that "whether it is development of crop production through irrigated or water harvesting and land development in rainfed areas or development through subsidiary occupation programmes, a compact area approach is necessary, which certainly allows the programmes to benefit the small as well as the marginal farmers in the same area. Our objective being to benefit

the small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers so that they can better themselves and cross the poverty line, if possible, with State assistance and our above analysis showing that there is need to cover both small and marginal farmers under the irrigation, land development and subsidiary occupation programmes in the same area, the artificial distinction between SFDA programme and MFALA programme should now be given up".¹¹

Integration of SFDA's and MFALA's

35. The Commission, therefore, recommended that in all programmes of SFDA/MFALA, a compact area approach should be followed and these agencies should cover both small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers in the same area. This should hold good in respect of both the existing SFDA/MFALA Projects as well as additional ones. Accordingly, in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), the SFDA and MFALA Projects were integrated and the distinction between them was abolished. The combined Agencies were named SFDA's and this programme was also extended to other areas. Each Project was confined to one revenue district and was expected to cover 50,000 families. At present, SFDA programme is in operation in 168 districts out of a total of 406 districts

11. Government of India, National Commission on Agriculture, Interim Report on Reorientation of Programmes of Small Farmers', Marginal Farmers' and Agricultural Labourers' Development Agencies, (New Delhi, August 1973), (Mimeo), p.19.

in the entire country and it covers both the categories i.e. small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers.

36. Under this programme, separate Agencies have been set up in each of the selected districts as registered societies, to implement the programme. The administration of these agencies is entrusted to officials. While these Agencies have separate identity and staff located at the district level, these operate in the field through the broad structure of rural development administration in the districts.

Area of Operation of SFDA Gurgaon

37. The Small Farmers' Development Agency (SFDA), Gurgaon was registered on 7th January, 1971 under the Registration of Societies Act of 1860 and with this SFDA programme was started in the erstwhile district of Gurgaon. As a result of reorganisation of the districts in Haryana State, a major part of Rewari Sub-Division of Gurgaon district was merged with Mohindergarh district in 1972-73. Subsequently, on 15th August, 1979, two Sub-Divisions of Gurgaon district namely Ballabgarh and Palwal were formed into a separate district of Faridabad. However, inspite of these changes, SFDA Gurgaon continued to operate in the entire erstwhile district of Gurgaon as one unit till 31st of March, 1980 when the operation of the SFDA programme in the four C.D.

Blocks of erstwhile Rowari Sub-Division was transferred to Mohindergarh district. The working of SFDA programme in the newly created district of Faridabad continues to be the responsibility of SFDA Gurgaon, as before.

38. The erstwhile district of Gurgaon had 6 Sub-Divisions and 15 C.D. Blocks and till 31st March 1980, the SFDA programme in all the 15 Blocks remained the responsibility of SFDA, Gurgaon. The names of these Sub-Divisions and the C.D. Blocks are given below :

Operational Area of SFDA Gurgaon

District	Sub-Division	C.D. Blocks	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1. Gurgaon (as constituted at present)	Gurgaon Nuh Ferozepur Jhirka	1. Gurgaon 2. Sohna 3. Pataudi 4. Nuh 5. Ferozepur Jhirka 6. Punahana	
2. Faridabad (New district created on 15.8.79)	Ballabgarh Palwal	7. Ballabgarh 8. Faridabad 9. Palwal 10. Hodal 11. Hathin	
3. Mohindergarh	Rewari	12. Rewari 13. Khol 14. Bawal 15. Jatusana	Operation of SFDA programme in these four C.D. Blocks transferred to Mohindergarh district w.e.f. 1.4.1980.

Criteria for Selection of SFDA Districts

39. The selection of SFDA districts in the country was done by the Government of India, on the basis of certain criteria, in consultation with the State Government concerned. The districts were selected on the following considerations¹²:

- i) That there is adequate number of small potentially viable farmers needing assistance in the area;
- ii) That the infrastructure of cooperatives and the central cooperative banks and land development bank is fairly strong, and capable of undertaking the credit operations expected; and
- iii) That either surface irrigation or ground water potential exists in the area.

The erstwhile Gurgaon district satisfied all the above requirements.

Salient Facts About SFDA Gurgaon Area

40. The present area of operation of SFDA Gurgaon covering 11 C.D. Blocks of Gurgaon and Faridabad districts as constituted today extends to 4738 sq. kms. It has a varied topography of undulating land and alluvial plains. The total population of

12. Government of India, Department of Rural Development, Compendium of Instructions on SFDA/MFAL Projects, (September, 1975), p.4 (Letter No.11-21/69-Agril.Credit dated 19th November, 1969).

the area as per 1971 Census was 1.37 million spread out in 14 towns and 1178 villages and 79.5 per cent of this lived in rural areas. The density of population was 288 persons per sq. km. Of the total population, 0.37 million or 26.9 per cent was the working population and out of this 47.0 per cent were cultivators and 2.0 per cent were engaged in allied agricultural activities. Another 10.7 per cent were working as agricultural labourers. Thus, about 60 per cent of the working population was engaged in agriculture.¹³ The extent of literacy was 27.2 per cent.

41. The 11 C.D. Blocks under SFDA Gurgaon have a total reporting geographical area of 0.47 million hectares of which 0.38 million hectares or 80.5 per cent was net area sown or net cropped area. The percentage of net irrigated area to net area sown was 53.3. The gross cropped area was 0.53 million hectares giving the crop intensity of 139.2 per cent. Five major crops of the area covered 79.0 per cent of the gross cropped area. Those being : wheat - 32.8 per cent of gross cropped area; bajra - 19.3 per cent; Gram - 9.6 per cent; Jowar - 8.8 per cent; and barley - 8.5 per cent. Besides these crops, pulses, sugar-cane and rape and mustard were also grown in the area.¹⁴ The average rainfall per annum was about 70 cms.

13. Syndicate Bank Zonal Office, New Delhi, District Credit Plan 1980-82, Gurgaon District, (1980) and District Credit Plan 1980-82, Faridabad District, (1980).

14. Ibid.

42. As regards important infrastructural facilities, all the villages in the area are linked by all weather roads and all the villages are also electrified. The number of regulated agricultural markets in the area is 15. The area is also very well served by the banking and cooperative institutions as shown below¹⁵:

Institution	No.
i) Commercial Bank branches	99
ii) Regional Rural Bank* (Gurgaon Gramin Bank branches)	40
iii) Cooperative Bank branches	23
iv) Land Development Bank branches	4
v) Primary Cooperative Societies (Mini Banks)	258

15. Ibid.

* Gurgaon Gramin Bank was established in 1975 for providing loans exclusively to small/marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers and rural artisans i.e. households having land upto 5 acres or without land and with annual income not exceeding Rs.4000. It was sponsored by the Lead Bank of the district (Syndicate Bank) in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India and the State Bank of India with their share holdings of 35, 50 and 15 per cent, respectively.

Main Functions of SFDA Gurgaon

43. As mentioned earlier, the basic objective of SFDA programme is to help the small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers to improve their levels of living through the operation of various schemes and provision of credit and subsidy to them for productive purposes. Besides the responsibility of identifying the members of the target groups and preparing suitable schemes for them, the SFDA act as catalysts and coordinators between identified members of the target groups, credit institutions, development departments and the C.D. extension organisation in the field through which the schemes are implemented.

44. In the above context, the main functions which SFDA Gurgaon has listed for itself are given below¹⁶:

- i) To identify the members of the targeted group;
- ii) To arrange credit (long-term loans) for minor irrigation programmes;
- iii) To arrange crop loans (short-term credit) for fertilizers, certified seeds and pesticides etc.;
- iv) To arrange dairy loans (medium-term credit) under subsidiary occupation programmes;

16. SFDA Gurgaon, Annual Report of Small Farmers Development Agency, Gurgaon (Haryana), 1977-78, (Gurgaon, 1978) p.6.

- v) To arrange credit for other animals like sheep, goats etc.;
- vi) To arrange poultry loans for setting up small poultry units;
- vii) To promote any activity instrumental in the development of agricultural economy of the identified members;
- viii) To work as catalytic agent for identified farmers in regard to financing institutions;
- ix) To strengthen cooperative structure;
- x) To provide financial assistance to identified farmers to the extent of 25 per cent (for small farmers) and $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent (for marginal farmers and agricultural labourers) of the capital cost in the shape of subsidy; and
- xi) To arrange priorities (to provide help through various schemes) for identified farmers.

These functions also give a broad idea of the type of schemes evolved to help the small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers by SFDA Gurgaon.

Scope of SFDA Gurgaon

45. When SFDA Gurgaon was established in January, 1971, this Agency like other SFDAs was expected to help only the

small but potentially viable farmers. As regards marginal farmers and agricultural labourers, separate agencies (MFALAs) had been set up in the country during the Fourth Five Year Plan (Para 32). However, in November, 1971, the Government of India took a decision, on representations received, that SFDA's should also provide help to marginal farmers in their area. The communication in this connection from the Government of India stated that "Representations have been received that the small farmers development agency should cater to the marginal farmers also in the area of its operation. It had been pointed out that it is inequitable to exclude the marginal farmers from assistance from SFDA. Further, it was pointed out that when inducing the small farmers to take up improved agricultural practices and adopt high yielding varieties with assistance from the agency, it would not be practicable to exclude marginal farmers in the same area..... It has, therefore, been decided that the farmers with holdings below the floor limit adopted by the small farmers development agency may also be included in the programmes which have been drawn up or being considered by the agency.The services of the agency and the financial assistance it extends may, therefore, cover these marginal farmers also. This assistance would be on the same terms as

for small farmers".¹⁷

46. As a result, SFDA Gurgaon also started assisting marginal farmers from 1972 - the rate of financial assistance being the same (25 per cent subsidy on the capital cost involved) both for small and marginal farmers. However, with the abolition of distinction between SFDA's and MFALAs during the Fifth Plan (Para 35), each Agency was expected to cover small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. Accordingly, SFDA Gurgaon also brought agricultural labourers within the ambit of its activities from the year 1974-75. With this, the subsidy rate of 33^{1/3} per cent of capital cost involved as prevalent in MFALAs was adopted for the marginal farmers and agricultural labourers in SFDA Gurgaon.

Definition of Small and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers

47. The initial communication issued by the Government of India in November, 1969 regarding the definition of small farmers to be adopted by the SFDA's stated that "It is not possible in view of the limitations of finance and the known strategies, to tackle all the small farmers. It is, therefore, proposed to confine attention to those small farmers who are potentially viable to become surplus producers with improved

17. Government of India, Department of Agriculture, Compendium of Instructions on SFDA/MFAL Projects, (December, 1971), (Mimeo), pp.7-8.

techniques, input support, irrigation etc. No uniform definition can be laid down in terms of size of holdings for this category. Their size may vary from area to area according to the productivity and economics of the land. It has, therefore, been left to each project implementation Agency to define the class of farmers which can be eligible for the assistance in the project area. Each pilot project is expected to serve nearly 50,000 of these farmers in a phased programme during the Fourth Plan period.¹⁸ It was, however, expected that generally the size of holdings of potentially viable small farmers would range from 2.5 to 5.0 acres in the case of irrigated or irrigable land and upto 7.5 acres in the case of dry area.¹⁹

48. In view of above considerations, SFDA Gurgaon adopted a uniform definition of small farmers both for irrigated and un-irrigated holdings as those farmers with ownership holdings between 2.5 to 7.5 acres. The farmers with holdings below 2.5 acres were considered as marginal farmers. These definitions remained operational in SFDA Gurgaon area till June, 1974.

18. Government of India, Department of Rural Development, Compendium of Instructions on SFDA/MFAL Projects, (September, 1975), p.8 (Letter No.11-21/69-Agri.Cr. dated 19.11.69).

19. Government of India, Planning Commission, Programme Evaluation Organisation, Report on Evaluation Study of Small Farmers, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Projects, 1974-75, (Delhi, 1979), p.1.

49. In the meantime, various guidelines were issued by the Government of India as and when any specific point was raised by any Project Agency (SFDA or MFALA). The objective was to clarify the intension of the programme and to bring about some uniformity in concepts, definitions etc. Some of the important points covered in these guidelines upto 1973 are given below²⁰:

- i) For marginal farmers, the maximum limit of holding was fixed at 2.5 acres. This limit was generally for irrigated areas;
- ii) Agricultural labourers were those having a homestead, and earning 50 per cent or more of their income from agricultural wages;
- iii) Entire land of a family whether in the same village or in the neighbouring villages should be taken into account;
- iv) Separate holding limits may be laid down for irrigated and unirrigated land and a formula may be devised for the conversion of wet and dry land to arrive at effective size of holding based on an estimation of likely income;
- v) The concept of operational holdings rather than ownership holding i.e. recorded rights in land records may be adopted for identifying the participants; and

20. Ibid., pp.1 and 49-51.

vi) The programmes of the Agencies should exclude the following :

- Such farmers as can be identified on the basis of land holding limits but have income from non-agricultural sources exceeding income from the land.
- Farmers who have a steady income of Rs. 200 and above per month.
- Those farmers who are not engaged in cultivation themselves (partly or fully).

50. Further guidelines were issued by the Government of India in June, 1974 in the context of the merger of SFDA's and MFALAs. These took into account the earlier guidelines and laid down the following definitions and criteria for small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers²¹:

- Small farmers : cultivators with land holding below 5 acres. In case of class-I irrigated land as defined in the land ceiling legislation, the ceiling will be 2.5 acres.
- Marginal farmers : cultivators having land holdings upto 2.5 acres. In case of class-I irrigated land as defined in the land ceiling legislation, the ceiling will be 1.25 acres.

21. Ibid., p.51.

iii) Agricultural labourers : those without any land holdings but having a homestead and deriving more than 50 per cent of their income as agricultural wages.

In addition, the guidelines specified that (a) small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers should themselves be cultivators, (b) land holding limits will be applied on the basis of ownership holdings, (c) family unit should be taken as those normally living together as a household, (d) in respect of share croppers and tenants, such of them as have recorded rights should be identified as small and marginal farmers and (e) those with substantial off-farm income of Rs.200 per month or more for the family may not be included under any programme of the Agency.

51. The above definitions and criteria were also adopted by SFDA Gurgaon from July, 1974. However, in the case of class-II irrigated land, the ceiling limits adopted by SFDA Gurgaon were: for small farmers - 3.75 acres and for marginal farmers - 1.87 acres. These definitions and criteria have remained in operation since then in SFDA Gurgaon area.

52. The above exposition also brings out the complexity of defining the small and marginal farmers in particular and this becomes all the more difficult for the field staff when frequent changes are made, as was actually done by the

Government of India in this case, in the definitions and criteria to be used. Further, in the case of small farmers, the Agencies were expected to cover only those who were 'viable' but no attempt was made either by the Government of India or by the SFDA Gurgaon to define the term 'economic viability'. It is only in the context of recent introduction of the Integrated Rural Development programme that the 'poverty line' concept of income has now been suggested (Section-I, Para-23).

Administrative Set Up of SFDA Gurgaon

53. SFDA Gurgaon is a corporate body which was registered on 7th January, 1971 under the Registration of Societies Act of 1860. It has a Governing Body which is the supreme authority for governing the affairs of the Agency subject to such limitation as the Government of India may, from time to time, impose in respect of the expenditure of its grants. The Deputy Commissioner Gurgaon who is the Head of the District Administration, acts as the Chairman of the Governing Body. The Principal Administrative Officer of the Agency is a senior officer called the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is assisted by four Assistant Project Officers (APOs) and other supporting staff - all located at the district headquarters. The CEO is drawn from the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) or Haryana Civil Service (HCS).

54. The SFDA Gurgaon, like other SFDA's has no field staff of its own and the Agency is supposed to work through other concerned development departments and financial institutions. The Agency thus mainly functions as a catalyst and coordinator between identified target group members (also called beneficiaries of the programme), credit institutions, development departments and the extension organisation in the field.

55. At the State level, there is a State level Coordination Committee to review the progress and to look after all such Agencies in Haryana. This Committee consists of Heads of various Departments and is presided over by the Agricultural Production Commissioner of Haryana. The responsibility for the operations of all SFDA's in Haryana rests with the Department of Agriculture at the State level.

56. The Governing Body of SFDA Gurgaon consists of 35 members including the Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and the Member-Secretary. Deputy Commissioner Gurgaon is the Chairman; and Deputy Commissioners of Faridabad and Mohindergarh act as Vice-Chairmen because till 31st March, 1980 four C.D. Blocks of Rewari Sub-Division of Mohindergarh district remained a part of SFDA Gurgaon and the new district of Faridabad continues to be the part of SFDA Gurgaon for operational purposes (Paras 37 and 38). The Chief Executive Officer of SFDA Gurgaon acts as the

Member-Secretary. Other members include the following :

-	District level officers of various development departments.	.. 17
-	Deputy Secretary to Government of India, Department of Rural Development.	.. 1
-	Deputy Secretary to Government of Haryana, Department of Agriculture.	.. 1
-	Chairmen, Central Cooperative Banks	.. 2
-	Chairmen, Primary Land Development Banks	.. 5
-	Chairmen Gurgaon Gramin Bank	.. 1
-	Representatives of Commercial Banks	.. 2
-	Non-officials nominated by the State Government.	.. 2

57. Originally, the heads of Panchayati Raj Institutions at the District and Block levels i.e. Chairman of Zila Parishad, Gurgaon and Chairmen of all Panchayati Samitis in the district, respectively were also the members of the Governing Body. However, these Institutions have since been superceded in Haryana and have not yet been revived - Zila Parishads were superceded in 1973 and Panchayat Samitis in September, 1977.

58. The Governing Body is expected to meet at least once a quarter to discuss and deliberate upon the activities of the Agency and there has to be an Annual General Meeting at least once in every year. Annual budget, schemes and

programme of work as prepared by the Agency are placed before the Governing Body for deliberation and approval. The Agency prepares the schemes within the framework of guidelines issued by the Government of India. At the same time, the Agency can also suggest new schemes which it may consider suitable for the area. Other departments/agencies and villagers are also consulted by the Agency about the suitability of schemes. After the approval of the Governing Body with modifications or otherwise, the budget, schemes and programme of work are sent to the State Level Coordination Committee for its clearance. This Committee can also suggest changes both in the content and nature of the schemes. The State Government then obtains the approval of the Government of India as this programme is being financed by them. Schemewise budget sanctions are received by the Agency from the State Government. The Agency has, however, the freedom to change inter-sectoral allocations upto 25 per cent. For changes above this limit, special sanction of the State Government is required.

Work Distribution Among APOs

59. Chief Executive Officer, SFDA Gurgaon is the Principal Administrative Officer of the Agency. He is assisted by four Assistant Project Officers (APOs). The broad distribution of work among the APOs is as follows :

- (i) APO (Statistics): He is an officer of the Economic and Statistical Organisation of the State Government. His main responsibilities include: preparation of project reports, budget and programme of work; general administration; monitoring of progress; tertiary sector schemes; and training programmes.
- (ii) APO (Cooperation): He is an officer of the State Co-operative Department. He deals with minor irrigation schemes; crop loans; and enrolment of new members for cooperatives and organisation of special cooperative societies. His other major responsibility is that of liaison work with the cooperative and commercial banks and land development banks.
- (iii) APO (Animal Husbandry) : He is an officer of the State Animal Husbandry Department and his major responsibility is with regard to animal husbandry schemes.
- (iv) APO (Agriculture) : This post is vacant at present. The post had been filled earlier by an officer from the Development and Panchayats Department of the State Government. His main areas of responsibility cover all agricultural programmes and liaison with the Block Development and Panchayat Officers.

60. All the APOs are expected to formulate schemes in respect of their areas of responsibility on the basis of guidelines issued by the Government of India, discuss the suitability of schemes with the officers of other concerned departments and agencies as also with the villagers in village meetings as well as informal discussion with them, scrutinise the applications received from the members of the target groups and follow-up the same with the concerned financial institutions and other agencies and propagate the programmes and facilities offered by the SFDA.

Budget and Overall Progress of SFDA Gurgaon.

61. For the initial five year period, all SFDA in the country were allocated Rs.15 million each by the Government of India and thereafter, allocations were made @ Rs. 0.25 million per C.D. Block per year. SFDA Gurgaon till 1979-80 was covering 15 C.D. Blocks. (Para 38). With the launching of Integrated Rural Development (IRD) programme in the country (Section-I, Paras 22-23) from the year 1978-79, some additional allocations were made by the Government of India in respect of some C.D. Blocks selected for the IRD programme in SFDA Gurgaon area for the years 1978-79 and 1979-80. It has since been decided by the Government of India to cover all the C.D. Blocks in the country under IRD programme w.e.f. 2nd October, 1980 with

an allocation of Rs.0.5 million per C.D. Block per year. Till 1978-79, the entire funds for SFDA were made available by the Government of India. From 1979-80, while 50 per cent of the expenditure is borne by the Government of India, the remaining 50 per cent is to be provided by the State Government.

62. From January, 1971 when SFDA Gurgaon was started till the close of 1979-80, it received a total allocation of Rs.33.3 million and it actually spent an amount of Rs.30.8 million. The expenditure formed 92.5 per cent of the allocations. Year-wise details are given in the table below :

SFDA Gurgaon - Allocations and Expenditure

Year	Budget Estimate	Amount received	Actual expenditure	(Rs. '000)
				Col.4 as %age of Col.3
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1970-71		550.0	169.3	30.78
1971-72	1705.0	2092.9	2059.0	98.38
1972-73	3510.0	3948.8	3912.7	99.09
1973-74	3928.0	5284.6	5233.7	99.04
1974-75	4830.0	4830.3	4493.5	93.03
1975-76	3556.0	3417.0	3346.6	97.94
Sub-Total		20123.6	19214.8	95.48
1976-77	3000.0	1980.8	1931.0	97.49
1977-78	4425.0	4487.0	4356.0	97.08
1978-79	3750.0	3722.1	3602.6	96.79
1979-80	3750.0	2984.0	1717.0	57.54
Sub-Total (1976-80)		13173.9	11606.6	88.10
Grand Total		33297.5	30821.4	92.56

Source: SFDA, Gurgaon (Haryana)

63. It may be seen from these figures that the extent of utilization of the allocations by SFDAs Gurgaon has been very high in practically all the years. In fact, the Agency was able to utilize the entire initial allocation of Rs.15 million for five years within a period of four years i.e. upto 1974-75 and additional funds were made available to the Agency. According to the Annual Reports of SFDAs Gurgaon, it ranked first among all SFDAs in the country in respect of utilization of funds upto 1975-76. In subsequent years, it ranked among the first five Agencies in the country in this respect.

64. The main activity of SFDAs, as already mentioned, has been to identify the members of the target groups i.e. small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers and help them through suitable schemes to improve their levels of living and for this purpose assist them to get loans from financial institutions and to provide them subsidy on productive expenditure to the extent of 25 per cent of expenditure in the case of small farmers and $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent in the case of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers subject to a maximum subsidy of Rs.3000 per household. The extent of subsidy provided under various schemes from 1971 to the close of 1978-79 was as follows :

22. Small Farmers Development Agency Gurgaon (Haryana),
Annual Report: 1978-79, pp.11-12.

SFDA Gurgaon - Expenditure on Subsidy: 1971 to 1978-79

Name of the Scheme (1)	Subsidy amount (Rs.million) (2)	Percentage of total subsidy expenditure (3)
1. Minor irrigation (Tube wells etc.)	13.76	54.07
2. Subsidiary occupations (Animal husbandry schemes)	6.97	27.39
3. Agricultural programme (Inputs, implements & bullocks)	2.09	8.21
4. Infrastructural support programme (Chilling plants, market committees and managerial subsidy to cooperative institutions)	1.95	7.66
5. Soil and water management programme (mainly water channels)	0.55	2.16
6. Rural artisans programme (mainly training and implements)	0.13	0.51
Total	25.45	100.00

65. The above figures also indicate the areas of major thrust of the SFDA programme in Gurgaon. From 1971 to 1978-79, the total expenditure of SFDA Gurgaon amounted to Rs.29.10 million and the total expenditure on subsidy formed 87.43 per cent of this amount. The rest of the amount was spent on the payment of salaries to the staff and other items of administrative expenditure.

66. Each SFDA was expected to help 50,000 families (Para 35). It was, however, not possible to get a correct and precise idea about the number of various categories of households (small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers) who benefitted from the SFDA programme in Gurgaon. All the same, scheme-wise figures for important schemes are given below²³ :

SFDA Gurgaon : Scheme-wise Number of Beneficiaries
1971 to 1978-79

Name of the Scheme	Number of beneficiaries
(1)	(2)
1. Minor Irrigation	
- Shallow tube wells	5908
- Percolation wells	216
- Deep tube wells	63 (41 working)
2. Soil and Water Management	
- Water channels	862
3. Subsidiary Occupation Programme	
- Dairy development	11285
- Poultry development	1502
- Cross-bred heifers	1702
- Sheep-breeding	68
4. Agricultural Programme	
- Threshers	1167
- Spray pumps	460
- Storage bins	1483
- Input subsidy	8119
- Bullocks	319
- Demonstration plots	5244
5. Rural Artisans	
- Sewing machines	218
- Shoe making	131
- Mudha making	46
Total	38,793

Besides these, 323 community tube wells were also installed with assistance by SFDA Gurgaon and these will be covering a large number of families.

Section - III

AN APPRAISAL OF ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

67. As discussed in para 63 of Section-II, SFDA Gurgaon has been very successful in terms of utilization of funds. This raises the question as to what have been the important reasons for this performance? Since SFDA Gurgaon has no field staff of its own and was expected to operate through other concerned development departments and financial institutions, the discussion of this question will involve an examination of the system of propagation of the SFDA programme, securing participation of beneficiaries, handling of their applications for loans and the system of coordination and review of progress. However, in order to have a broad idea of the effectiveness of the totality of organisational arrangements and system of working of SFDA Gurgaon, it is also necessary to critically look into some other important aspects covering the following :

- Formulation of schemes, their suitability and involvement of beneficiaries and criteria for improving their income levels. Since the main objective of the programme was to improve the levels of living of the members of the target group, it is necessary to examine whether the system has been geared to look into this aspect and whether some criteria have been developed for this purpose.

- How far is the system geared to ensure that the benefits of the programme reach only those for whom these were intended ? What are the follow-up and evaluation arrangements for this purpose ?

68. Keeping in view the questions and issues raised above, it is proposed to discuss these under the following main headings :

1. Important Reasons for Substantial Utilization of Funds.
2. System of Propagation of SFDA Programme, Securing Participation of Beneficiaries and Handling of their Loan Applications.
3. System of Coordination and Review and Involvement of Peoples' Representatives.
4. Formulation of Schemes, their Suitability and Involvement of Beneficiaries and Criteria for Improving their Income Levels.
5. System of Follow-up of Beneficiaries and Evaluation of the Impact of the Programme.
6. Integration of Rural Development Agencies at the District Level.
7. Conclusion.

Important Reasons for Substantial Utilization of Funds

69. SFDA Gurgaon was able to achieve substantial utilization of funds mainly on account of the following factors :

- i) Extensive system of propagation of SFDA programme and securing participation of beneficiaries.
- ii) Well developed institutional infrastructure for credit (Section-II, Para-42) and handling of loan applications from the beneficiaries directly by the concerned financial institutions. For instance, in the case of minor irrigation schemes which accounted for 54 per cent of SFDA's total expenditure on subsidies to beneficiaries (Section-II, Para-64), the loan applications were mostly collected and handled directly by the Primary Land Development Banks.
- iii) Effective liaison by SFDA Gurgaon with the concerned financial institutions, especially regarding the follow-up of loan applications.
- iv) Effective coordination and review arrangements mainly through regular meetings of officers of various development departments and financial institutions by the Deputy Commissioner Gurgaon who is the Chairman of the Governing Body of SFDA and head of administration in the district. If necessary, some additional meetings of the concerned officers were also called by the Chief Executive Officer of SFDA Gurgaon.

The details of the working of these arrangements are briefly explained in the following paragraphs.

System of Propagation of SFDA Programme,
Securing Participation of Beneficiaries
and Handling of their Loan Applications

70. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SFDA Gurgaon and also the Assistant Project Officers (APOs) during their extensive field tours have been holding meetings of Gram Panchayat members (Gram Panchayats are the elected bodies for local-self government at the village level) and villagers to explain them the nature of their schemes and facilities of subsidy offered by SFDA for small/marginal farmers and agricultural labourers and the procedures involved for getting loans from the financial institutions and subsidy from SFDA. Efforts are made through Gram Panchayat members to get as many small/marginal farmers and agricultural labourers for these meetings, as may be possible. Points made by the villagers in these meetings are duly clarified. The members of Gram Panchayats and others are also requested to pass on this information to others.

71. The CEO, SFDA Gurgaon has also been calling meetings of the Block Development and Panchayat Officers (BDPOs) and officers of other concerned departments and financial institutions, as and when considered necessary to inform them

about the nature of SFDA schemes etc. and clarify the position in respect of questions raised. Since the BDPOs have the responsibility of supervising the Gram Panchayats in Haryana, they pass on this information to Gram Panchayat members and other villagers during their tours. The skeleton field staff of the financial institutions also provides information to villagers about their loaning facilities and the nature of SFDA schemes.

72. In short, SFDA Gurgaon has been making use both of Gram Panchayats and other concerned agencies for the propagation of its schemes among the villagers in general and members of the target groups in particular and this happens more frequently through meetings at the village level. There is, however, no specified regularity of these meetings but these are held frequently spread out in different areas according to the requirements of achieving targets laid down and their frequency is increased if the situation so demands. All the same, approach continues to be random and ad-hoc depending on the initiative and leadership qualities of the CEO. The question as to how this approach can be systematised and institutionalised through proper planning and programming is discussed later in paras 81-82.

73. In addition, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Gurgaon who is the Chairman of the SFDA, also explains and clarifies these matters, among other things, to the Gram Panchayat members

and villagers during his extensive tours and when the village people come to meet him for various purposes. By virtue of his position and responsibilities as head of the district administration, he meets a large number of villagers during his tours and many also come to see him in his office at the headquarters. The present DC Gurgaon has also fixed two hours from 1100 to 1300 hours every Friday for meeting the members of Gram Panchayats at his headquarters for matters relating to development work. These meetings are also used by him, among other things, to talk about SFDA programme and ask the Gram Panchayat members to explain these to villagers, in turn.

74. In all the meetings taken by CEO, SFDA Gurgaon and DC Gurgaon, problems are also brought to their notice by the villagers in connection with the implementation of SFDA schemes. The main problem generally is the delay in processing of loan applications and identification forms. Position is explained by the officers in the case of genuine problems of administration and follow-up action is taken in other cases.

75. All these arrangements of village meeting and open communication between the SFDA and villagers had helped in the acceptability of SFDA schemes by the villagers. According to local officers, another important reason for this was the generation and strengthening of the general awareness about various rural development programmes among the villagers by

the working of the extension organisation under the C.D. programme which has been in operation for many years now (Section-I, Para-12). However, the real problem even in such a situation is : how to ensure that the benefits of SFDA schemes reach only those for whom these were intended ? This issue is referred to later in para-83.

76. For the identification of the members of the target group, SFDA Gurgaon has prescribed a form and a person becomes eligible to get the prescribed subsidy only after this identification is duly completed. The identification form calls for information on land holding of the family and these have to be filled in by the village Patwari (Land revenue official). Then the Sarpanch (Head) of the Gram Panchayat and Gram Sachiv (Secretary Gram Panchayat) have to certify that the person concerned belongs to the village, that the household pays separate 'Chula' tax levied by Gram Panchayat on household basis and that his income from other sources is below Rs.200 per month. After this, the form is countersigned by the Block Development and Panchayat Officer (BDPO). From these details, SFDA determines whether the person comes in the category of small or marginal farmer or agricultural labourer.

77. A prospective beneficiary has two choices after his identification form has been duly completed - either he can send this along with his loan application directly to the

concerned financial institution or he can send these papers to the SFDA headquarters for onward transmission to the concerned financial institution.

78. In the case of the most important activity of SFDA Gurgaon i.e. in respect of minor irrigation schemes, the applications are submitted by the identified farmers directly to the Primary Land Development Banks (PLDBs) which have the responsibility of financing these schemes or these are collected directly by the field staff of PLDBs as also with the help of other officers like Tehsildars for achieving the targets under instructions of the Deputy Commissioner Gurgaon. Besides other things, the field staff of PLDBs also checks up the correctness of particulars contained in the identification form through local enquiries.

79. When loan applications along with identification forms are received directly by the financial institutions from the members of the target group, in case of doubt they send the identification forms to the SFDA for further enquiry and verification. Both in this case and in cases where SFDA staff itself may have some doubts, they generally make further enquiries themselves during their field visits or ask the concerned BDPO to look into these afresh. On the basis of these verifications, a decision is taken by the SFDA whether

the applicant is eligible for assistance under its programme or not. If found eligible the application is sent to the concerned financial institution.

80. In addition to the above procedure for handling loan applications of the members of the target group, at times, the SFDA Officers also organise camps in the villages in collaboration with the concerned financial institutions for on the spot identification of the beneficiaries and sanction of loans. Advance information about these camps and the nature of SFDA schemes is given to the villages mainly through Gram Panchayats and village meetings and all the concerned officials are asked to be present in the village on the specified date. Like the general village meetings for the propagation of SFDA programme, there is also no prescribed frequency of such village camps. These camps are organised as and when considered necessary in order to : (a) get over delays involved in normal procedures on the basis of complaints received, (b) achieve targets with speed due to shortage of time and (c) cover areas which had not been responding well to the SFDA programme due to procedures involved and other doubts. All questions and doubts are also clarified on the spot.

81. Through the above system of propagation of SFDA programme, involvement of beneficiaries and handling of their loan applications has helped SFDA Gurgaon to achieve substantial

utilization of funds, yet the success of the entire system, other things remaining the same, mainly hinges on the initiative, drive and leadership qualities of the Deputy Commissioner of the district and the Chief Executive Officer of SFDA - the two most important functionaries in the system. The success of SFDA Gurgaon for the utilization of funds could thus also be attributed to the good amount of interest taken by the successive Deputy Commissioners and the Chief Executive Officers over the years in the working of SFDA Gurgaon.

82. The basic strength of any system should, however, not depend so much on the individuals as on the institutional arrangements which should ensure effective involvement of all concerned with clear cut responsibilities. In this context, there is a need to introduce changes in the existing system and to institutionalise these arrangements to ensure its systematic working. These changes are equally relevant for "Antyodaya" approach to be followed under Integrated Rural Development programme (Section-I, Para-23). Some suggestions in this regard are briefly given below :

- i) The present system of covering any beneficiary from any area implies extension of the programme wherever it is conveniently possible. In this process, more enthusiastic and enterprising families among the target group are likely to take advantage of the

schemes and those at the bottom of the ladder are likely to be left out. There is thus an urgent need for introducing phasing in the programme in terms of coverage of villages on the basis of some objective criteria e.g. such villages should be covered first which have a high proportion of weaker sections like Scheduled Castes who are generally considered to be poor. It should not be difficult to collect this information quickly. In fact, the Economic and Statistical Organisation of Haryana Government is already engaged in collecting and compiling this and other relevant information in a systematic manner for the entire State and it has already brought out a Block-wise Directory of Clusters of Villages having concentration of Scheduled Caste population. In the selected villages, efforts should be made to cover all members of the weaker sections by the programme as it will be both operationally difficult and otherwise inequitable to leave out some families among those and take them up later. At the same time, clear time limit should be prescribed for covering all villages in the area in a phased manner.

For the selection of villages on the basis of objective criteria, the local Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assembly may also be

consulted and taken into confidence as elected representatives of the people.

- ii) All the schemes suitable for the selected villages should be implemented with a clearly laid down time and activity schedule covering : (a) In which month(s) the propagation of schemes will be done in the villages and who all will be involved in this work, (b) In which month(s) loan applications will be collected and by whom and for which scheme(s), (c) What will be the time limit for scrutiny of applications, and (d) After scrutiny of applications, village camps may be organised in the villages according to a well planned programme for sanction of loans on the spot to avoid inconvenience to the poor. In these camps, fresh applications may also be accepted on the spot (Para-80).
- iii) The Chief Executive Officer of SFDA may also be given necessary authority, where required, over the officers of concerned departments and agencies in the district to ensure effective implementation of the programme on the suggested lines.
- iv) On the basis of work load involved for various activities and the requirements of its quality, the SFDA staff should be suitably strengthened at

different levels. The above suggested arrangements will make it easier to assess the work load involved than is the case at present.

83. The introduction of above arrangements will make the system more effective to achieve its objectives as also more clearly accountable. This will also ensure, to a large extent, that the benefits of the programme reach those for whom these are intended as it will enable officers to make more visits to the selected villages and, in the process, get to know the people better. At the same time, there should also be a suitable system for proper follow-up in this connection (See Paras 100-104).

System of Coordination and Review and
Involvement of Peoples' Representatives

84. There is a system of holding monthly coordination and review meetings of all district level officers, Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil), Tehsildars and Block Development and Panchayat Officers, on a regular basis by the Deputy Commissioners in Haryana State. These meetings are also attended by Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from the district.

85. The main purpose of these meetings is to review the performance of all development programmes in the district, to sort out the problems of coordination and delays, to discuss

public grievances requiring immediate attention which come to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner/are raised by the peoples' representatives (MPs and MLAs) present in the meeting and to discuss any other matters bearing on the working of the various departments of administration and agencies in the district.

86. These monthly meetings in Gurgaon last for the whole day and separate time is allotted for the discussion and review of progress, problems and issues involved in respect of different subjects covering the following :

- Food and supply arrangements
- Food adulteration-cum-health services
- Agricultural production programme
- Dairy development programme
- SFDA programme
- Command Area Development Agency (CADA) programme
- Public relations and grievances
- Flood and drought situation
- Municipal affairs
- Revenue collection matters
- Small savings
- Miscellaneous matters

87. For the discussion of SFDA programme, in addition to all officers of SFDA Gurgaon, officers of all concerned departments and agencies are also present. The progress of

the programme is reviewed scheme by scheme. If required, the concerned officers are requested to speed up the work and problems, if any, are also discussed, suggestions are invited and appropriate decisions are taken. The progress of follow-up action is reviewed in the next meeting.

88. The Chief Executive Officer of SFDA is also required to attend similar review meetings held as a part of the monthly meeting on other subjects having a bearing on the SFDA programme e.g. agricultural production and dairy development programmes etc.

89. Since one of the major responsibilities of SFDA is to arrange loans for the members of the target group through various financial institutions, its proper liaison and co-ordination with those institutions is of crucial importance for the successful implementation of its schemes. This co-ordination is affected through the District Consultative Committee of Banks. This Committee is also headed by the Deputy Commissioner Gurgaon and the Manager of the Lead Bank of the district (Syndicate Bank) is the convenor of this Committee. The Chief Executive Officer SFDA Gurgaon is a member. The Lead District Officer Gurgaon of the Reserve Bank of India is also a member. He has the responsibility of sorting out the problems of various banks with the Reserve Bank of India. Other officers of SFDA Gurgaon and concerned

development departments in the district are also requested to attend the meetings of the Committee.

90. The District Consultative Committee of Banks meets once every quarter. It has, however, constituted a Standing Committee from among its members to look into the operations and sort out problems on a continuing basis. It meets once every month and is presided over by the Chief Executive Officer SFDA Gurgaon. Various financial institutions in Gurgaon have adopted different villages for their operations and the decisions in this regard are also taken by the District Consultative Committee.

91. Though the commercial banks operating in Gurgaon are in the public sector, the Deputy Commissioner Gurgaon has no formal authority over these banks and the entire system of coordination mainly works through persuasion. Since commercial banks have a crucial role to play in rural development which is becoming increasingly complex due to operation of a variety of schemes, the need for effective coordination with banks is going to increase over time. In view of this situation, it may be worthwhile to authorise the Deputy Commissioner to write formally to their superior officers about the extent of cooperation extended by various commercial banks in the district in the field of rural development.

Formulation of Schemes, their Suitability and Involvement of Beneficiaries and Criteria for Improving their Income Levels

92. The basic guidelines regarding the preparation of SFDA schemes for helping the members of the target group were issued by the Government of India in November, 1969. These stated that "The Agency is expected to draw up plans for investment and production activities to be undertaken by the supported farmers..... the Agency may prepare various model schemes and patterns of assistance to suit the needs of cultivators in different situations..... In other words, there will be various plans of investment, production and income related to these credit operations, which should be suitable for cultivators in different sets of circumstances. Supplies, services and credit must be provided only on the basis of these programmes.... it is necessary that the operations to be undertaken by the small farmers must be well thought out and must in fact, lead to increased production and viability of the farm, recovery of dues and payments etc. No specific programmes are being laid down here as it is intended to provide full flexibility to the Agency to devise the programmes most suitable for the areas with which it is concerned".²⁴

24. Government of India, Department of Rural Development, Compendium of Instructions on SFDA/MFAL Projects, (September, 1975), p.41 (Letter No.11-21/69-Agri.Cr. dated 19.11.69).

93. SFDA Gurgaon had accordingly prepared the main schemes based on conditions in the district in consultation with officers of other development departments. Besides collection of data and information from other departments, some field visits were also undertaken in this connection. As a result, SFDA Gurgaon opted for schemes which were generally known to be having good scope for increasing production. These covered minor irrigation schemes, supply of improved agricultural inputs and animal husbandry schemes and these are still in operation. Since SFDA started in Gurgaon in January 1971, it was not possible now to get information on whether the prospective beneficiaries were consulted in any manner about these schemes. Perhaps, these were formulated mainly on the basis of consultations with the concerned development departments at the district level.

94. The guidelines from the Government of India had also suggested that separate schemes may be prepared to help the cultivators in different situations. This was a good suggestion. But operationally, this suggestion could be implemented only if two pre-conditions were satisfied : (a) the concept of "viability" was defined in income terms and (b) for each proposed scheme, cost-benefit data were compiled. It is only through these sets of information that the Agency could

determine the income gap of a selected beneficiary and suggest suitable scheme(s) to help him to become viable. In actual practice, no efforts were made to define "viability" either by the Central/State governments or SFDA Gurgaon itself.

Similarly, no systematic efforts were made by SFDA to undertake any cost-benefit analysis of the proposed schemes - some rough and ready estimates have been presently made by SFDA Gurgaon for animal husbandry schemes. Consequently, the above suggestion was never implemented and the general interpretation of "viability" followed was that any scheme which helped a beneficiary to increase his production/income, in turn, improved his viability.

95. Though developing the above mentioned criteria particularly of "viability" is not a very easy task due to conceptual issues and the many variables and assumptions involved, yet it could have been possible for SFDA Gurgaon to prepare some less sophisticated estimates through short studies in consultation with the Economic and Statistical Organisation of the State government and then to evolve a proper system of their revision and refinement over time on the lines suggested in paras 98-99.

96. The situation has, however, changed with the introduction of Integrated Rural Development (IRD) programme in the entire country from 2nd October, 1980. Now, the concept of "poverty

"line" has been clearly indicated by the Government of India and Agencies are expected to help the weaker sections of society to cross the poverty line (Section-I, Para-23). While this is a clear improvement as compared to the vague concept of "viability" discussed earlier, it has its own operational problems as mentioned below.

97. The main method suggested in the IRD guidelines for collecting information about households below the poverty lines is through household surveys and a detailed schedule has been prescribed for the purpose. Only those households owning 5 acres or less of dry land or equivalent class-I irrigated land are to be covered by the survey. The survey is expected to be conducted by the Village Level Workers (VLWs) or Patwaris or any other responsible agency in the villages. Now, conducting such a survey for determining the levels of income is a technical job requiring good understanding of the concepts of gross and net income, experience of socio-economic survey work and precision of approach. Neither the VLWs nor the Patwaris or other persons at the village level are likely to be able to do a proper job of it along with their regular duties and work, in a short time. The question then arises as to what is the way out of this situation ?

98. One workable solution in this regard could be the development of simple but fairly realistic norms or criteria of per unit levels of net annual income from land and other assets e.g. income per acre of average type of irrigated/un-irrigated land on the basis of general cropping pattern and input use and similarly income per appropriate units of poultry, milch animals, goats, sheep etc. Criteria may also be developed in respect of likely increases in income by participating in various schemes. All this information could be used to determine without any difficulty, the general level of income of a target group household through an identification form (Para-76) as also to suggest one or more schemes to a household to cross the poverty line.

99. Some rough income criteria in respect of animal husbandry schemes have already been prepared by SFDA Gurgaon. To start with, estimates of all the required criteria could be quickly prepared by the SFDA officers on the basis of detailed discussions with knowledgeable officers of other concerned departments and by talking in a planned manner to a number of villagers in different parts of the district to cross-check the information and to evolve some broad area-wise criteria if considered really necessary. It may be useful to do this work in collaboration with the Economic and Statistical Organisation of the State government. It is also

necessary to make appropriate arrangements and plan of work for a more systematic collection and analysis of this information on a limited but regular basis for the refinement and periodic revision of these criteria. Once the collection of information is systematised, it should not be difficult to do so.

System of Follow-up of Beneficiaries and Evaluation of the Impact of the Programme

100. An effective system of follow-up of beneficiaries is very necessary for ensuring that the benefits of the SFDA schemes reach only those for whom these were intended. It is also very important to evaluate the impact of the programme on improving the income levels of beneficiaries which was the basic objective of the programme. In actual practice, no systematic and organised efforts were made by SFDA Gurgaon in these directions. This happened partly due to continuous preoccupation of SFDA officers for achieving financial targets and partly on account of lack of staff. Perhaps, the achievement of financial targets was considered an adequate criteria to determine the overall effectiveness of the performance of the programme.

101. The main arrangements that have been evolved by SFDA Gurgaon are in respect of follow-up of loan applications of the identified beneficiaries with the concerned financial

institutions with a view to get these cleared expeditiously.

These arrangements are, of course, working very well.

102. Realising the crucial importance of follow-up and evaluation, the State government has recently issued instructions in this regard with clear fixation of responsibility of Chief Executive Officers of SFDAs/other Agencies under Special Programmes in the State as also of the officers of other concerned departments. Import instructions in this connection are mentioned below²⁵ :

A - At the District Level

- i) The Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of SFDAs in the State shall : (a) remain on tour for at least 12 full working days in a month and (b) themselves contact at least 500 beneficiaries under agriculture/animal husbandry programme every year.
- ii) Subsidy for agricultural implements shall be released by CEO, SFDA after verifying at least 10 per cent of the total target cases at random and verification of at least 20 per cent cases by Deputy Director Agriculture.

25. Memo No. Acctt.80/13091-14102, dated 12.9.80 from Commissioner and Secretary to Government of Haryana, Agriculture and Forest Departments, Chandigarh.

- iii) 20 per cent of beneficiaries under animal husbandry, sheep development, piggery and poultry etc. shall be contacted by the Deputy Director Animal Husbandry on the basis of the sample questionnaire.
- iv) Sub-Divisional Agricultural Officers/Subject Matter Specialists shall inspect at least 20 per cent of the agricultural works.

B - At the State Level

- v) Special Project Cell at the State level shall be responsible :
 - a) To conduct evaluation surveys of major activities under various Special Programmes including SFDAs.
 - b) On the basis of evaluation studies, to suggest remedial measures and other ways and means for the improvement of the programme.
 - c) The experts in various disciplines in Special Project Cell will also inspect the works concerning their disciplines in the field from time to time.

103. Besides the major points mentioned above, the instructions also deal with the responsibilities of senior officers for inspection of SFDAs and other similar Agencies and the points to be looked into during these prescribed inspections. All these instructions are an important step in the right

direction and one only wonders why such instructions were not issued long ago !

104. Though these instructions have distributed the work of follow-up and evaluation among SFDA and other concerned departments yet to be able to keep an effective track of these follow-up and evaluation measures, the SFDA staff will need to be strengthened. Unfortunately, the instructions are silent on this issue.

Integration of Rural Development Agencies at the District Level

105. As mentioned earlier in Section-I, para-20, the Government of India had introduced during the Fourth and Fifth Plans, Special Programmes including SFDA for the development of weaker sections of the rural society and backward areas. Most of these programmes were being managed by registered corporate bodies as in the case of SFDA. Out of these programmes, two were operating in Gurgaon district namely SFDA; and CADA (Command Area Development Agency) covering the command area of Gurgaon canal. While SFDA Gurgaon was established in January 1971, CADA was started in March 1976. Right from the beginning, the Chief Executive Officer of SFDA Gurgaon has also been incharge of CADA as its Chief Project Officer. Below him both these agencies have separate staff at the headquarters.

106. In the context of the need for Integrated Rural Development (IRD) and introduction of the IRD programme from 1978-79 on a selected basis and from 2nd October, 1980, in the entire country, doubts have been often raised with regard to achieving the objectives of IRD through the existing administrative arrangements of multiple agencies looking after various Special Programmes in the districts.²⁶ The Government of India have accordingly issued instructions in October 1980, for the integration of administrative arrangements both at the State and district levels.

107. As regards the integration of administrative arrangements at the district level, the communication from the Government of India addressed to the State governments states the following²⁷ :

"At the district level, there should be a single agency for implementing all special programmes. This agency is to be named as the District Rural Development Agency/Society..... The Agency will be headed by the Collector/Deputy Commissioner.

26. Guy Hunter, The Management of Agricultural Development (Reflections on Field Level Planning and Management from India and Sri Lanka: (January-March 1980), Overseas Development Institute, London (April 1980).
27. Government of India, Ministry of Rural Reconstruction, letter dated 24th October, 1980.

.. The Agency should necessarily have a full-time executive officer preferably, a senior scale IAS Officer or his equivalent from the State Services.....

Officers possessing dynamism and aptitude for rural development should be chosen to work in the district agencies and at other levels. They should be given continuity of tenure in their assignments for at least 2-3 years. Since frequent transfers of such key personnel give a serious setback to the implementation of the programme, premature transfers need to be avoided.

The district agency which consisted of a Project Officer, 2-3 APOs, and some ministerial staff, is to be strengthened with the addition of a Credit Planning Officer, a Industries Officer, an Economist/Statistician.....

As has been repeatedly stressed, it would be absolutely necessary to revitalise the block level machinery for effective implementation of the rural development programmes. In this context, it would be desirable to consider up-gradation of the post of Block Development Officer, bringing together the Extension Officers of various departments under the administrative control of the BDO and filling up the vacant posts of VLWS".

108. The integration of administrative arrangements as indicated above is an important and positive step for achieving the objectives of integrated rural development. However, it needs to be examined whether the arrangements visualised above are adequate in terms of staff support to the proposed District Agencies for preparing district/block plans and effective follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the IRD programme. It also requires to be examined as to what will be the specific nature of linkages of District Agencies with the Planning/other departments at the State level and Panchayati Raj Institutions at the district and lower levels and how co-ordination and integration will be made effective all along the line. These are important issues and need to be examined through some micro studies of the working of these arrangements.

Conclusion

109. Though SFDA Gurgaon has been able to achieve substantial utilization of funds since its inception in January 1971, yet there is still a need to systematise and institutionalise the organisational arrangements to further improve its effectiveness. The main suggestions in this regard relate to :

(a) developing norms or criteria regarding income per unit of land, poultry etc. in respect of various schemes for

suggesting a suitable mix of schemes to the identified beneficiaries according to their peculiar conditions to enable them to rise above the poverty line (Paras: 98-99);

(b) phasing of the programme in terms of coverage of villages on the basis of some objective criteria and developing and following an appropriate time and activity schedule for various operations (Para-82); and (c) system of follow-up of beneficiaries for ensuring that the benefits of the schemes reach only those for whom these were intended and evaluation of the impact of the programme (Paras: 100-104).

110. In order to facilitate the institutionalisation of improvements on the suggested lines as also to ensure effective implementation, an important requirement, among other things, is that the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of these Agencies should have a reasonable continuity of tenure. This point has always been stressed but often ignored in practice.²⁸ It also happened in the case of Gurgaon and the present incumbent is

28. Government of India, Planning Commission, Programme Evaluation Organisation, Report on Evaluation Study of Small Farmers, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Projects : 1974-75, (1979), p.11.

the 3th CEO²⁹ of SFDA Gurgaon since its inception 10 years ago. These frequent transfers obviously did not give adequate time to many CEOs in Gurgaon to be able to apply themselves seriously to the improvements required in the system. To bring about any lasting improvements, it is very crucial that the CEO as also other officers of the Agency should have continuity of tenure for a reasonable period of time.

III. As regards securing participation of beneficiaries in the programme, according to the officials, there was generally no difficulty due to the type of schemes selected (minor irrigation, supply of improved agricultural inputs and animal husbandry schemes) which were known to be having good scope for increasing production (Para-93); increased awareness of the villagers over the years due to the operation of the C.D. programme (Para-75); and extensive village meetings

29. The duration of tenure of various CEOs in Gurgaon has been as follows :

Name of the CEO (1)	Date of Posting		Period of Tenure (4)
	From (2)	To (3)	
1. Mr. T.D. Jogpal	25.11.70	5.11.74	About 4 years
2. Mr. A.D. Malik	6.11.74	12.12.76	" 2 years
3. Mr. N.S. Sindhu	29.12.74	16.2.77	" 1½ months
4. Miss Rajni Gautam	17.2.77	5.5.77	" 2½ months
5. Mr. N.S. Sindhu	12.5.77	1.9.77	" 3½ months
6. Mr. Y.P. Raheja	2.9.77	31.3.78	" 7 months
7. Mrs. Anita Chaudhary	10.7.78	6.9.79	" 14 months
8. Mr. N. Bala Baskar	7.9.79	date	Continuing for the last 16 months.

conducted by the SFDA officers (Paras: 70-74).

112. The District and Block level Panchayati Raj Institutions of rural local-self government have been superceded in Haryana by the State Government (Section-II, Para-57) and only Gram Panchayats at the Village level are working. These Panchayats have been used to help in the propagation of the SFDA programme and thereby to secure the participation of the beneficiaries. These institutions have thus played an important part in this direction (Paras: 70-74).

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